

I. AMENDMENT

Please make the following amendments:

In the Claims:

Please add new claim 69 as shown in the following claim set:

1-48. (Canceled)

49. (Previously Presented) A method for screening for a modulator of *MAP* kinase signal transduction comprising:

- (a) contacting a TAO2 polypeptide set forth as SEQ ID NO:4 or variant thereof having at least 80% homology to a TAO2 polypeptide and TAO kinase activity with an agent;
- (b) incubating said contacted TAO2 or variant thereof with an MEK3 or MEK6 polypeptide; and
- (c) determining the level of MEK3 or MEK6 activation,

wherein detecting a change in the level of MEK3 or MEK6 activation relative to a MEK3 or MEK6 incubated with said TAO2 polypeptide or variant thereof not contacted with said agent indicates that said agent is a modulator.

50. (Previously Presented) A method for screening for a modulator of *MAP* kinase signal transduction comprising:

- (a) contacting a cell expressing a TAO2 polypeptide set forth as SEQ ID NO:4 or a variant thereof having at least 80% homology to said TAO2 polypeptide and TAO kinase activity and an MEK3 or MEK6 polypeptide with an agent; and
- (b) determining the level of MEK3 or MEK6 activation,

wherein detecting a change in the level of MEK3 or MEK6 activation in said contacted cell relative to a cell not contacted with said agent indicates that said agent is a modulator.

51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 49 or 50, wherein a TAO2 variant having at least 80% homology to said TAO2 polypeptide is contacted with said MEK3 or MEK6 polypeptide.